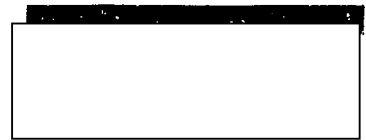


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Director of Central Intelligence

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DATE: OCT 2003

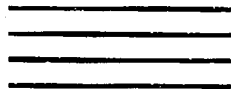
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Developments

INTERNATIONAL: Poor Prospect for Test Ban Talks

The 37 members of the Conference on Disarmament, which is to resume talks Monday on the proposed Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, are divided over the time frame for an accord. Various sources say the nonaligned group and most nonnuclear states are pressing for rapid completion, but France, the UK, and China want at least a two-year delay.

— [] France's conservative government will use various tactics to delay drafting of the treaty, hoping to stall the talks until Socialist President Mitterrand leaves office next year and clears the way for a resumption of nuclear tests. []

[] France's proposal—that the treaty include a provision to let the nuclear powers continue to conduct stockpile reliability tests—was made to slow the talks, and that Paris is prepared to make other “digressive” proposals.

— China, too, has tried to slow the talks; it has withheld its views on key issues and has raised controversial proposals, including an exception for peaceful nuclear explosions and an agreement for no first use of nuclear weapons. []

Meanwhile, more and more nonnuclear states are linking their willingness to endorse extension of the NPT to progress toward a test ban treaty.

[] the Scandinavian members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group are planning to organize a European voting bloc at the NPT extension conference next May.

— They reportedly will demand that the nuclear powers agree to a test ban treaty as a condition for nonnuclear state support of NPT extension. France, however, contends that the nuclear powers should not agree to stop testing until indefinite NPT extension is assured; French diplomats are adamant that Paris will not sign a test ban treaty before the presidential election. []

[] many states seeking progress—including Australia, Mexico, and some European—are looking to the US to move the talks along. Russia reportedly wants a test ban treaty near completion by next spring *and probably would work with the US to mediate the test ban talks, with a goal of achieving the NPT extension.* [] []

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